

BYZANTINE  
SILVER STAMPS : SUPPLEMENT I  
NEW STAMPS FROM THE REIGNS OF JUSTIN II  
AND CONSTANS II

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IN my book *Byzantine Silver Stamps* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies, VII [1961]), I investigated the dating and provenance of Byzantine stamps and the type of organization that employed them. I also presented a catalogue of all known Byzantine silver objects with stamps. Almost inevitably, as soon as such a work is published, additional objects hitherto unknown come to light. These new discoveries either support our understanding of the stamping system and offer further documentation for the dating and/or provenance of Byzantine stamps, or else they prove to be exceptions that lead to the modification or rejection of present theories.

Whenever possible, I hope to publish such new pieces as come to my notice, using the same format as that used in *Byzantine Silver Stamps*. Each object will be given a number according to the position it most readily assumes in the chronological sequence of stamps determined in the book,<sup>1</sup> and the descriptive material will be presented as it was in the original catalogue. Additional notes will point out the distinguishing features of the new stamps, indicating how they may support or modify existing theories. Unless expressly noted, all references will be to the original numbers or pages in *Byzantine Silver Stamps*.<sup>2</sup> It is hoped that new material recorded in this way may be used in conjunction with the main text until the time comes to rework the entire corpus.

Presently, two new objects have been called to my attention since the publication of the book; a fragment of a plate in the British Museum and a plate in the collection of Dr. Hugo Oelze, Amsterdam.

<sup>1</sup> In order to allow for the unlimited interpolation of objects in the sequence, the decimal system will be used: for example, one of the objects discussed below is given the number 78.1, because it comes after no. 78 and before no. 79. Thus, if in the future an object, which should be placed between no. 78 and no. 78.1 should turn up, it may be given the number 78.01, etc. Similarly if an object turns up that should be placed between 78.1 and 79, it may be given the number 78.2, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Abbreviated: *BSS*.

## No. 19.1 FRAGMENT OF PLATE

THE BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON

DESCRIPTION: Small fragment decorated with concentric circles (fig. a).

Wt. 32.5 gr.; greatest diam. of obverse 5.2 cm.; diam. of footring 4.8 cm. (P. Lasko)

PLACE OF DISCOVERY: Said to have been found in Turkey. Acquired in 1962.

CONTROL STAMPS: Five stamps — a round, a hexagonal, two square, and a long. These were damaged during the soldering of the footring (fig. b). The readings were taken from the photograph:

○ Bust, type 1; inscribed ΛΕΟΝ||[T] OC.

⬡ Near the footring, to the right of the round stamp, above the second square: monogram ΘΕΟΔΩΡΟV; see the secondary monogram of nos. 20–26; inscription illegible.



□ Nearest the long stamp: monogram of Justin II, type a; inscribed --CT|| --TA--?



□ Between the square stamp above and the hexagon: monogram ΙΟVΛΙΑΝΟV; see nos. 15, 16; inscribed ΛΕΟ[N]ΤΟC.



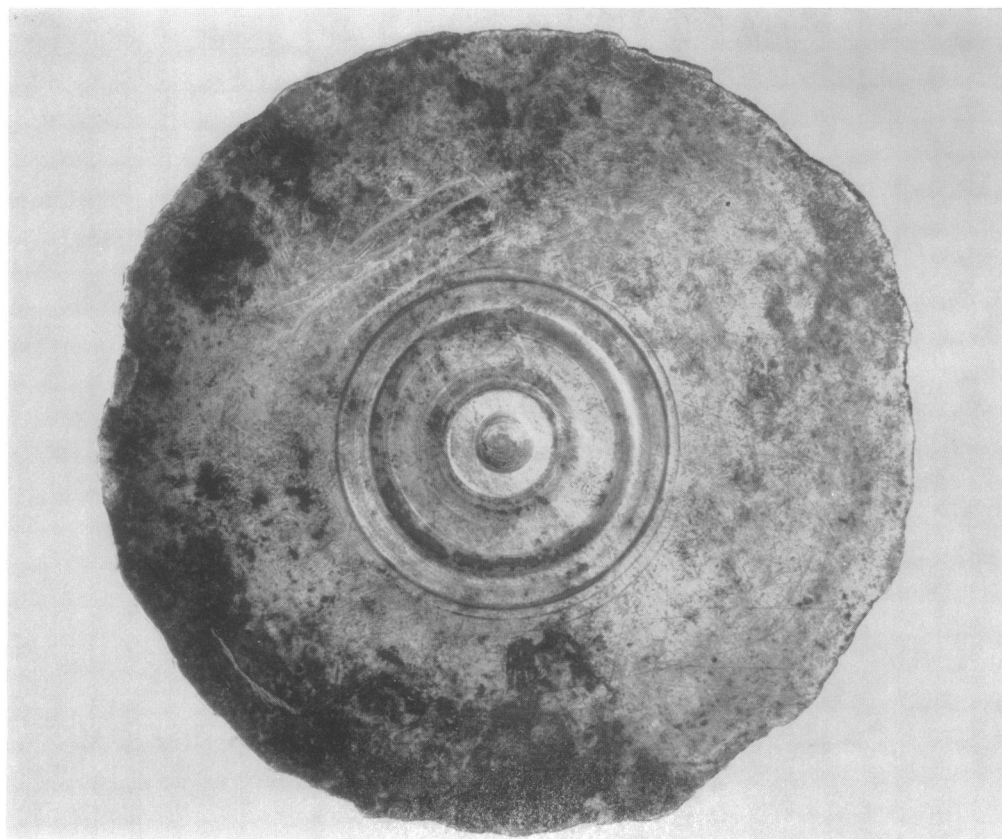
□ Bust, type 1; monogram ΙΟVΛΙΑΝΟV, as in the above square stamp; inscribed ΤΑΡ||C[OC].



DATE: Justin II, A.D. 565–578. The imperial monogram in the first square shows that these stamps date from the reign of Justin II. The early type of bust and the relationships with nos. 15 and 16, from the reign of Justinian I, place them at the beginning of Justin's reign.

Unpublished

*Source of Illustration:* The British Museum, reproduction courtesy of the Trustees.

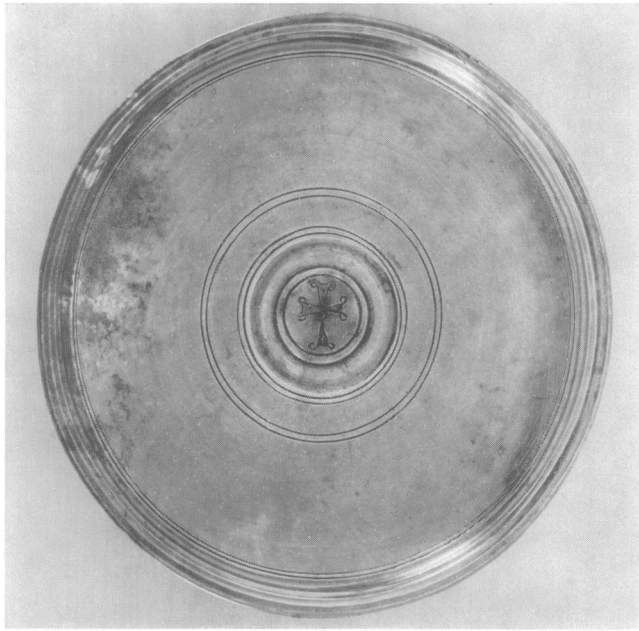


a. Fragment of Plate

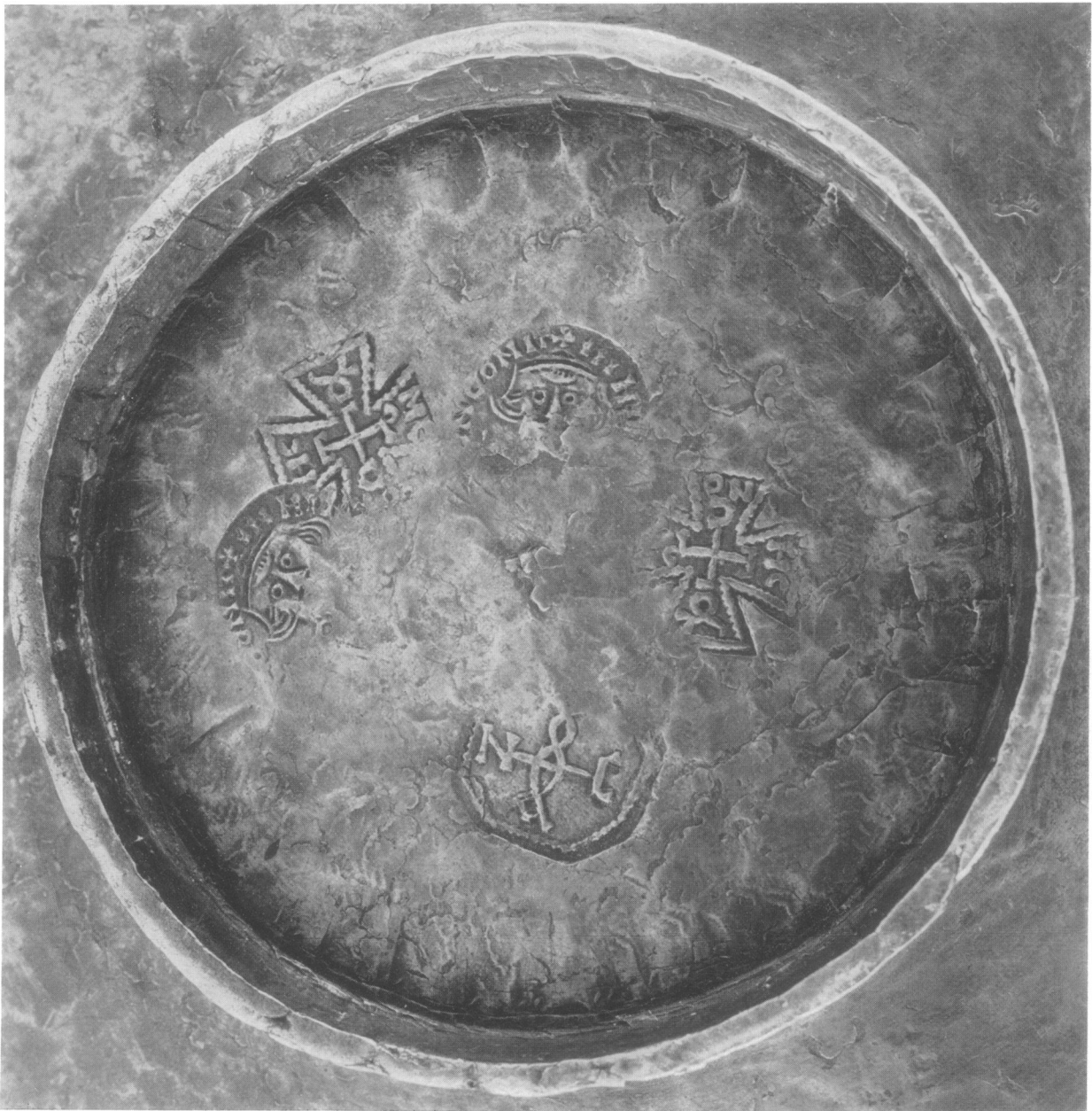


b. The Stamps

No. 78.1



a. Plate with Inscribed Cross



b. The Stamps

## No. 78.I. PLATE WITH INSCRIBED CROSS

COLLECTION OF DR. HUGO OELZE AMSTERDAM

DESCRIPTION: Plate decorated with plain bands of turning on the rim and, in the center, a cross inscribed within concentric circles (fig. a). The left arm and top of the cross are filled in with silver, and no traces of gilding or of niello remain. The filling has fallen out of the right arm and foot of the cross, revealing irregular hatching.

Wt. 400 gr.; diam. 19 cm. (Oelze)

PLACE OF DISCOVERY: Found during dredging operations in the River Schelde, on the Dutch-Belgian frontier. Acquired by Dr. Oelze in 1958, "some years after its discovery" (Oelze).

CONTROL STAMPS: Five stamps are clearly visible – two round, one octagonal, and two cruciform (fig. b). The stamps appear to have been applied before the decoration, since they were damaged by hammering with a blunt instrument around the center of the plate. The readings were taken from the photograph:

- Between the two cross stamps: imperial bust of Constans II, type 8 (*BSS*, Table I); the beard appears to be short (clearer in the accompanying round stamp) and the asymmetrical arrangement of the hair is very evident, as is a short "fringe" on the forehead;\* the remains of a globus crucifer can be traced; inscribed in Latin,  $\Delta\text{I CONIT}||\text{IN}||\text{III} \dots$  (*infra*, note 18, Wroth, *op. cit.*, p. 255 ff.).
- Same as above.
- ⬡ This stamp has eight sides, rather than six, and is not inscribed with a name (see no. 88 and the second "round" stamp of no. 78; *infra*, notes 19, 29); cruciform monogram  $\text{A}\Theta\text{ANACIOV}$  (compare the secondary monogram of no. 33).
- ⦿ Between the round stamps: cruciform monogram  $\text{C}\epsilon\text{P}\Gamma\text{IOV}$  (compare nos. 41–46, 48–50 and no. 100; see also the inscription in the long stamps of nos. 72–73, and the cross stamps of nos. 75–77); inscribed  $\text{CV}||\text{M}[\epsilon]||\text{ON}||\text{HC}$ ; this is the only known instance where the initial letters of the inscription form part of the monogram in the center (*infra*, note 20).
- ⦿ Same as above; inscribed  $\text{CV}||\text{M}\epsilon||\text{ON}||\text{HC}$



DATE: Constans II, A.D. 641–651 (*BSS*, p. 11, note 42). The relationships between the octagonal stamp and the stamp on no. 78 place these stamps toward the end of the Imperial series (see *infra*, and *BSS*, p. 21).

Unpublished.

Source of Illustration: Courtesy of Dr. Hugo Oelze.

\* W. Wroth, *Catalogue of the Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum* (London, 1908), I, pl. xxx, 14 ff.

## COMMENTARY

## No. 19.1

The stamps on the British Museum fragment<sup>3</sup> follow in most respects the normal pattern for Imperial stamps established by Justinian I.<sup>4</sup> Five stamps are found, and these have the usual shapes: round, hexagonal, square, and long. The arrangement of monogram, inscribed name, and imperial bust in each shape is standard. In this case an additional square substitutes for the fifth shape which more normally would be a cross. The repetition of one shape and the omission of another is common in the Imperial series;<sup>5</sup> it first occurs toward the end of the reign of Justinian I, on no. 16, where an additional long stamp is substituted for the usual square. On no. 19, also from the reign of Justinian, an additional cross substitutes for a round. This kind of substitution becomes especially frequent toward the end of the Imperial series in the seventh century, when the organization, as originally designed, was disintegrating. On the British Museum fragment the repetition of the square differs from the usual pattern, and this will be discussed below. For the present it may be significant that the repetition of shape first occurs (according to the secondary monogram of no. 16) under Julian, *comes sacrarum largitionum* toward the end of the reign of Justinian I,<sup>6</sup> and the same monogram of Julian appears in the stamps of the British Museum fragment.

Over and above the features which clearly place the stamps on the British Museum fragment in the Imperial series, there are some peculiarities not found among normal Imperial stamps: Although the round stamp, the square stamp with the monogram of the Emperor, and the long stamp with secondary monogram are entirely regular,<sup>7</sup> the hexagon and the second square are not. The normal imperial hexagon contains an imperial monogram identical with the monogram in the square. In the present example the hexagon contains a monogram that is not only dissimilar to the imperial monogram in the square, but also differs from the secondary monogram as it appears in the long stamp. Aside from the irregularities that occur among Imperial stamps in their early stages under Anastasius I (nos. 1–5) and again in the reign of Constans II, when the system was deteriorating (nos. 75–78.1; see *infra*), only four examples are known to date in which the monogram in the hexagon is not identical with the monogram in the square.<sup>8</sup> The present example offers one more exception to the rule and it suggests that on this occasion a second official contended for some of the duties of the *comes sacrarum largitionum*. On the British Museum

<sup>3</sup> This fragment was brought to my attention by Mr. Peter Lasko of the British Museum. Mr. Lasko very kindly supplied the statistical information and arranged for me to have the photographs used here.

<sup>4</sup> BSS, p. 7 ff.

<sup>5</sup> BSS, p. 7 ff.

<sup>6</sup> BSS, Table V. The exact period of office of Julian is not known, but the stamps of nos. 15 and 16, where his monogram occurs, belong late in the sequence of stamps under Justinian. It is possible that the office of the *comes sacrarum largitionum* did not always change hands with a change of emperor; see nos. 27 and 28.

<sup>7</sup> See BSS, pp. 8, 11, 15.

<sup>8</sup> Nos. 28, 29, 36, 41. BSS, p. 12.

fragment the monogram in the hexagon reads Theodorus. A *comes sacrarum largitionum* called Theodorus was well known in the reign of Justin II, and his monogram appears on seven of the eight stamped objects from this reign (nos. 20–26). The monogram in the hexagon of this fragment may indeed belong to the same Theodorus whose monogram perhaps occurs here in an earlier form.<sup>9</sup>

As mentioned above, the monogram in the long stamp on this fragment reads Julian. Few of the men who directed the office of the *sacrae largitiones* in the reign of Justin II are known by name. Apparently a Syrian named Magnus held the office in 566,<sup>10</sup> but his monogram is not found in the stamps. In the same year, Theodorus Petri was Master of Offices<sup>11</sup> and a man named Julianus was Prefect of the City.<sup>12</sup> Each of these three dignitaries, Magnus, Theodorus, and Julianus, held other prominent positions later in the reign of Justin II.<sup>13</sup> It is true that there is no indication that this Julianus was the same person who was *comes sacrarum largitionum* toward the end of the reign of Justinian, or that the monogram of Theodorus on the British Museum fragment belonged to the same person whose monogram occurs on nos. 20–26, for both these names are too common to afford by themselves reliable evidence for establishing identity. Nevertheless, it is striking that both names acquired notoriety contemporaneously in the relatively short reign of Justin II, and that both monograms occur on one set of stamps from the same reign. For the time being, all one can say is that there may have been an interval when the duties of the *comes sacrarum largitionum* were shared by more than one person.<sup>14</sup> Whatever the reason for the irregular monogram, the hexagon on the British Museum fragment remains an exception to the general rule.

The square stamp on the British Museum fragment which repeats the monogram of Julian is equally exceptional. Here the square shape is not only substituted for the normal cross, but it also contains the secondary monogram ordinarily placed in the cross stamp, and an inscribed name different from that inscribed in the square with the imperial monogram. The fact that this stamp was actually substituted for the cross stamp may be the reason for these irregularities. Nevertheless, in all other Imperial stamps from the reign of

<sup>9</sup> For the comparable development of similar monograms, see *BSS*, p. 16 and p. 29, note 91.

<sup>10</sup> In addition to the references to Magnus mentioned in *BSS*, Table V and p. 28, note 89, there is a seal belonging to Magnus the Syrian, to which M. Seyrig has drawn my attention; see H. Seyrig in G. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord* (Institut français d'archéologie de Beyrouth, L), III (Paris, 1958), pp. 40–42. For the career of Magnus, see W. Ensslin, "Magnus (26)," Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie*, XXVII (Stuttgart, 1928), col. 491, and Seyrig, *op. cit.*, p. 41, note 2.

<sup>11</sup> Corippus, *De laudibus Iustini Augusti minoris* (Bonn ed., 1836), I, 25 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Justinian, *Novellae (Corpus Iuris Civilis*, 3, ed. by Schoell and Kroll [Berlin, 1928]), CXL.

<sup>13</sup> A convenient tabulation of officials known in the reign of Justin II, giving their dates and the relevant sources, is in E. Stein, *Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Reiches vornehmlich unter den Kaisern Justinus II und Tiberius Constantinus* (Stuttgart, 1919), p. 186. See also G. Lippold, "Theodoros (111)," in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie*, 2nd Ser., V (Stuttgart, 1934), col. 1906 f. Some of the difficulties encountered in a study of the *comes sacrarum largitionum* are described in *BSS*, p. 28, note 89. For the other offices, see p. 29, notes 92 and 93. To present a complete investigation of these offices with the relevant sources would require an extensive discussion.

<sup>14</sup> Note that during this period one person might hold more than one office at a time, i.e., the *comes* Magnus may have held the office of *comes sacrarum largitionum* while he was also *curator* of an imperial *domus* (*BSS*, p. 37).



Justinian I to the end of the reign of Heraclius, where two stamps of the same shape are found on a vessel, both stamps are identical.<sup>15</sup> A simple explanation in these cases is that one of the five officials was unavailable and his duty was therefore undertaken by a colleague, who applied his own stamp twice. In the case of the British Museum fragment, however, two different and contemporary officials apparently used the same shape of stamp. A possible reason for this phenomenon is that there was a temporary ambiguity in the positions held by Julian and Theodorus at the beginning of the reign of Justin II. However this may be, the action was evidently discouraged, for it does not occur again in the series as it is now known.

Thus, although the stamps on the British Museum fragment belong within the Imperial series, they present several irregularities for which there is as yet no satisfactory explanation. Other irregularities which occur among Imperial stamps are discussed in *Byzantine Silver Stamps*. The number of such exceptions remains small, however, and in this case they may illustrate the uncertainty connected with the title of *comes sacrarum largitionum* in the latter part of the sixth century (*BSS*, pp. 28, 37 f.).

#### No. 78.1

The stamps on the plate in the collection of Dr. Hugo Oelze, Amsterdam,<sup>16</sup> are significant for the general study of Byzantine silver stamps because they throw light on the dissolution of the stamping system in the seventh century. The stamps on this piece are similar in many respects to those at the end of the Imperial sequence, while they also resemble those on a certain number of objects in the Irregular Group. Indeed, as the analysis of the stamps on no. 78.1 will show, arguments could be advanced for placing this piece either close to the end of the Imperial series (i.e., next to no. 78) or with the group of Irregular stamps associated with no. 100. Some of the reasons that prompted me to place it next to no. 78, rather than in the Irregular group, are presented in the discussion which follows. There are, however, other reasons which involve the decoration of this plate, and which cannot be discussed without going beyond the bounds of this paper. I hope to discuss the problems raised by the decoration of this piece and related objects on another occasion.<sup>17</sup> For the time being, no. 78.1 will be placed among objects with Imperial stamps and the comments following this description will be confined to the stamps.

Following are the features of the stamps on the Oelze plate that differ from those of normal Imperial stamps: 1. The stamps do not contain the imperial

<sup>15</sup> See *BSS*, p. 25. The only "exceptions" to this rule are nos. 54 and 78. No. 54 was stamped twice, on two different occasions, so that the rule here does not apply. It is equally inapplicable for no. 78; see *infra*, note 29.

<sup>16</sup> I am grateful to Mr. John Beckwith of the Victoria and Albert Museum for bringing this plate to my attention, and to Dr. Oelze for his gracious permission to publish it and for the detailed information which he took the trouble to communicate to me.

<sup>17</sup> The question whether the stamps were applied to an object before or after the decoration was raised for every object in *BSS*; apart from this technical point, the decoration itself was a factor in the discussion of the stamps for nos. 2, 32, 54; see p. 33 ff.

monogram normally found in the square and hexagonal stamps. Instead, on the Oelze plate there are two round stamps inscribed, in Latin, with the name of the Emperor whose bust is portrayed in the same stamps.<sup>18</sup> After the period of Anastasius I the name of the emperor is not generally inscribed in Imperial stamps, but it does occur on stamps from the Irregular group, namely, nos. 93, 94, 96, 97. 2. The normal hexagon is replaced by an octagon in which not only the imperial monogram but also the usual inscribed name is missing. No stamp of this kind has been noted previously in the Imperial series, but a similar stamp occurs on no. 88, the Albanian bowl in New York,<sup>19</sup> and on no. 100 there occur two round stamps containing only a cruciform monogram. 3. The initial letters of the name in the cross stamp are attached to the monogram in the center, a device that has been found neither among Imperial stamps nor among the Irregular ones.<sup>20</sup> However, a similar monogram, without these embellishments, is found in the three round stamps of no. 100.<sup>21</sup> Thus, among the three shapes of stamps applied to the plate, each shows features abnormal for the regular Imperial series, and each shows some resemblances to Irregular stamps.

If these relationships are pursued, further light is thrown on the Irregular stamps in question. The stamps of nos. 93, 94, 96, and 97 are dated by the inscription of the emperor's name, and nos. 96 and 97 appear to be contemporary with no. 78.1.<sup>22</sup> The stamps on these objects are as different from the Oelze stamps as from Imperial stamps, however; so the suggestion (*BSS*, p. 19) that they come from an entirely separate but contemporary system is reinforced. Further, the stamp on the New York bowl, no. 88, bears no indication of origin and has not been securely dated. The relationship between this stamp and the corresponding one on no. 78.1 suggests that the bowl (like the stamps on no. 78.1) may be dated in the seventh century, rather than in the fifth or sixth as was previously suggested.<sup>23</sup> It may also have been stamped at the same place as no. 78.1. Finally, it was noted in *Byzantine Silver Stamps*<sup>24</sup> that the stamps on no. 100 resembled Imperial stamps in some respects and might, therefore, be dated at approximately the same time as Imperial stamps,

<sup>18</sup> If it were not for the bust on the present stamp, the inscription could refer to either Constans II or Constantine IV, since both emperors were named *Constantinus*. Inscriptions divided after the letter T can be found on the coins of either reign, but the evidence of the bust is decisive.

<sup>19</sup> *BSS*, p. 246f., where it is described as "hexagonal (?)." In the light of the present discussion, the stamp of no. 88 appears indeed to have eight rather than six sides, and the same holds true for the "round" stamp of no. 78 (*infra*, note 29).

<sup>20</sup> The flourishes on the end of the omicron-epsilon might be considered as forming letters belonging to the monogram. However, the name  $\text{C}\epsilon\text{P}\text{F}\text{I}\text{O}\text{V}$  can be read from the monogram without these additional flourishes (see nos. 41–50, 100). On the other hand, if the flourishes on the end of the omicron-epsilon are interpreted as part of the inscribed name, the name  $\text{CVMEONHC}$  results (for the interchangeable use of omicron and omega, see *BSS*, p. 20, note 74). This is not only a common Greek name, but it also occurs frequently in stamps throughout the Imperial series (see Table IV, nos. 23, 24, 34, 41–43, 54B–57).

<sup>21</sup> If this monogram does indeed read  $\text{C}\epsilon\text{P}\text{F}\text{I}\text{O}\text{V}$ , the P is missing. This may be a conventional omission, however, for the same phenomenon occurs in the secondary monograms of nos. 20–26 (see *BSS*, p. 29, note 91), or it may be another sign of general disintegration.

<sup>22</sup> Nos. 96 and 97 are dated tentatively in the reign of Constans II.

<sup>23</sup> This bowl was found with no. 103, dated in the seventh century.

<sup>24</sup> P. 21.

or a little later. The stamps on no. 99 resemble the stamps of no. 100, and perhaps, too, the stamps on no. 101.<sup>25</sup> It was noted especially that stamps toward the end of the Imperial series, in the reign of Heraclius, sometimes portray Christian figures along with the imperial monograms and busts (nos. 45, 46, 72, 73, 77). Since such figures also occur in the stamps of nos. 99 and 100, this religious element forms a link between these Irregular stamps and the later Imperial ones.<sup>26</sup> The occurrence of similar monograms and similar types of stamps on nos. 78.1 and 100 enhances the relationship between these stamps and the Imperial ones,<sup>27</sup> for it will be shown that the stamps on no. 78.1 have several features in common with Imperial stamps as well as with those on no. 100.

Superficially, the Oelze stamps resemble Imperial stamps in many ways: in their number, their general lay-out, their shapes (with the exception of the octagon), and in the imperial bust in the round stamps.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, some of the irregular features described are also found among Imperial stamps: 1. The imperial name inscribed in a stamp, although uncommon, does occur in the stamps of Anastasius (nos. 1-5, especially 1 and 2). It was pointed out that the imperial inscription occurred in the Irregular stamps of nos. 94-97; but the stamps of nos. 94-97 differ from Imperial stamps in *all* other respects. 2. Although the octagonal stamp containing a monogram occurs on no. 88 in the Irregular group, one very like it also occurs among the Imperial stamps of no. 78.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the imperial inscriptions in the stamps of no. 78.1 were evidently designed to replace the imperial monogram, but neither monogram nor inscription is found in the stamps of no. 77 which are undoubtedly imperial. 3. Finally, the monogram CЄPΓIOV occurs frequently among Imperial stamps, as it does in the cross stamp of no. 78.1, and the same name is inscribed in nos. 72-77. The inscription CVMEONHC which occurs in the cross stamps of no. 78.1 is even more common on Imperial stamps.<sup>30</sup> Admittedly, both of these names are too ordinary to afford reliable evidence in themselves, but their frequent occurrence in Imperial stamps at precisely this time is an added factor in the relationship between them and the stamps of no. 78.1. Thus, all the factors which associated the stamps of no. 78.1 with stamps from the Irregular group find their counterpart among Imperial stamps.

<sup>25</sup> The stamps on no. 101 are so worn that it is difficult to determine whether they most resemble the stamps of no. 100, or the crude, imitative stamps of no. 102. No. 102 belongs to a group of objects with Irregular stamps, all of which were clearly influenced by Imperial stamps, but which were shown to be provincial imitations (nos. 89-92, 102, 103).

<sup>26</sup> A religious subject is also represented in the round stamp of no. 89, from Antioch, dated in the reign of Phocas. It was shown that the stamps from Antioch are provincial copies of Imperial stamps. It is interesting, however, that religious representations evidently were used in a Syrian center before this trend appeared in the capital. See A. Alföldi and E. Cruikshank, "A Sassanian Silver Phalera at Dumbarton Oaks," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 11 (1957), pp. 237-245.

<sup>27</sup> Note that the religious element is also a development in the iconography of Byzantine coins of the seventh century; see BSS, p. 21.

<sup>28</sup> See BSS, nos. 75-78.

<sup>29</sup> This stamp is described in the catalogue as "round." Upon closer observation it may well prove to be octagonal, like the stamp on no. 88 (see *supra*, note 19), in which case the resemblance to the octagon of no. 78.1 is even closer.

<sup>30</sup> See *supra*, note 20.

Further, most of the above comparisons refer to Imperial stamps from the reign of Constans II. In fact, all the Imperial stamps assigned to Constans on independent grounds (nos. 75–78) demonstrate features abnormal in regular Imperial stamps. In this respect, therefore, the Oelze stamps are entirely “normal.” It was shown that the Imperial system of controls evidently disintegrated in the seventh century, or, at least, the system as it was instituted by Justinian was changed and it was suggested that this development was anticipated in stamps from the reign of Constans II.<sup>31</sup> The stamps on the Oelze plate may indeed offer additional evidence of this kind.

It may be added that they are the only stamps from the reign of Constans II in which the name of the Emperor is inscribed. The attribution of nos. 75–78 to the reign of Constans II was based largely on the identification of the bust in the round stamp. Since a similar bust occurs on no. 78.1, along with the inscription of the Emperor’s name, this identification is now confirmed.

It was also suggested in *BSS* (p. 21f.) that the stamps on nos. 99–101 represent a system that developed later than the Imperial system as it is now known, either in Constantinople itself or in some outside center influenced by the Imperial system. The stamps on no. 78.1 not only offer evidence of a similar nature, but suggest that the first alternative is the more likely one. Support for this conclusion, in a negative sense, is provided by other Irregular stamps: It was pointed out that if the stamps on nos. 99–101 are not actually Imperial, then they must surely imitate Imperial examples, for they are similar to Imperial stamps in many respects. The same holds true for no. 78.1. Two sets of stamps that do, in fact, copy Imperial stamps are known, however: the stamps from Antioch (nos. 89, 90) and the Merovingian stamps (nos. 91, 92). In the case of both these examples, the copies exhibit many more abnormal features than do the stamps of no. 78.1. The Merovingian stamps, especially, show the kind of misunderstanding produced by deliberate copying (see the cross stamps of no. 91). The irregularities of the Antioch stamps are described in detail in the catalogue of *BSS*. Stamps associated with other centers, such as the Carthage stamps (no. 93) or the uncertain group, nos. 94–97, do not resemble Imperial stamps in any way. While the stamps on nos. 78.1, 88, 99–101 are close enough to Imperial examples to indicate a common origin, they do not exhibit the gross kind of misunderstanding that suggests pure imitation (see especially the stamps of no. 102). It is therefore more reasonable to suppose that they represent an outgrowth of the same system as the Imperial stamps and belong to the same locality.

In summary, the stamps on the Oelze plate resemble stamps at the end of the Imperial series, nos. 75–78. They may provisionally be grouped with the same series, and their relationship with no. 78 is the reason for placing them at the end of the sequence. For the time being, they may be assigned, like Imperial stamps, to Constantinople. It is further suggested that the Irregular stamps on nos. 88, 99–101 may be dated a little later than the Imperial series and also provisionally assigned to Constantinople.

<sup>31</sup> *BSS*, pp. 12, 31, 33.